

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11-157

Orleans

EAS.1265

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Eastham Center

Photograph



Address: 20 Colony Road

Historic Name: Walter and Mary Brown House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: 1935

Source: Deed research, Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: Craftsman

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

One-bay garage (1935, Photo 2)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

None

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 2.0 acres

Setting: This house is situated within a small 1926 subdivision of land west of Great Pond Road that slopes down to Deborah's Pond. This house is set on a two-acre parcel that borders on Deborah's Pond. The cottage is set very close to Colony Road in an otherwise wooded parcel.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

20 COLONY ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Walter and Mary Brown House, built in 1935, is a modest but intact one-story Craftsman cottage. Its form consists of a square block with a low-pitched, side-gable roof. The cottage is clad in painted, wood tongue-in-groove clapboard (sometimes referred to as novelty siding). The roof is clad in asphalt shingles and has projecting, open eaves with exposed rafter tails across the front and rear elevations. The front elevation is two bays wide with a single window and an entrance accessed from an open deck. Fenestration includes wood 2/1 and 6/6 windows which may be original, or at least reflect the original muntin patterns.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property is located just north of Eastham Center National Register District. Colony Road was part of a subdivision established on an 11.5-acre parcel sold by Eastham residents John W. and Catherine Sparrow in June 1925 to multiple families from Uxbridge in Worcester County.¹ Interestingly, numerous cottage subdivisions in the western sections of Eastham were developed by and/or sold lots to families from Worcester County. In this case, the Uxbridge residents – Dr. Rev. Robert C. and Donna L. Westerberg, William L. and C. Adelaide Johnson, Harry C. and Carolyn C. Newell, Herbert and Maidie Rowley, and Fred S. and Maud K. Blanchard – formed the Uxbridge Colony Association, Inc. and transferred ownership of this land to that corporation in September 1925.² In 1926, the corporation recorded a subdivision entitled “Plan of Pine Ridge” with ten lots (Figure 2).³ Perhaps because some of the parcels were intended for themselves, the lots are unusually large for early-20th century cottage colony development. Each parcel in the subdivision also has access and ownership rights to a portion of the shore along Deborah's Pond south of the subdivision.

This house has an Assessor date of 1926 but that is not accurate. This parcel, identified as Tract II, was sold in 1930 to Walter G. and Mary H. Brown⁴ – also Uxbridge residents, but not founders of the Uxbridge Colony Association. According to the Eastham Tax Commitment Books, this cottage (and the garage) were built in 1935. Walter Garfield Brown (1881-1969) married Mary Hamilton (1883-1979) in Uxbridge in 1905. He was listed as a civil engineer in the wire works industry. In the early-20th century, Worcester was a prominent site for the manufacturing of wire products.

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 418/ Page 247.

² Book 395/ Page 186.

³ Plan Book 82/ Page 103.

⁴ Book 472/ Page 557.

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In 1943, Walter and Mary Brown sold this property to Ralph H. and Eva S. Jacobs of Worcester.⁵ They may have known each other by profession - Ralph Henry Jacobs (1882-1979) was a wire company draftsman and engineer in census records. He married Eva Sarah Sweet (1886-1975) in Worcester in 1909. This cottage stayed in the Jacobs family until 1986 when Ralph and Eva's son, Robert H. Jacobs, sold this property to Bonnie Lynn Benton of Otisville, NY.⁶

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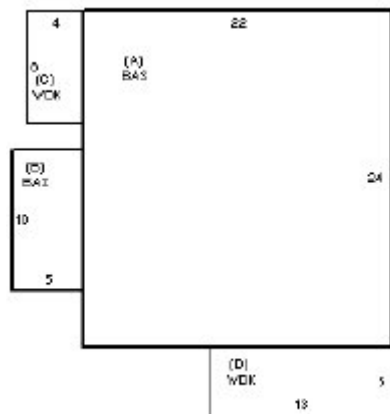


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View looking south.

⁵ Book 06/ Page 424.

⁶ Book 5356/ Page 265.

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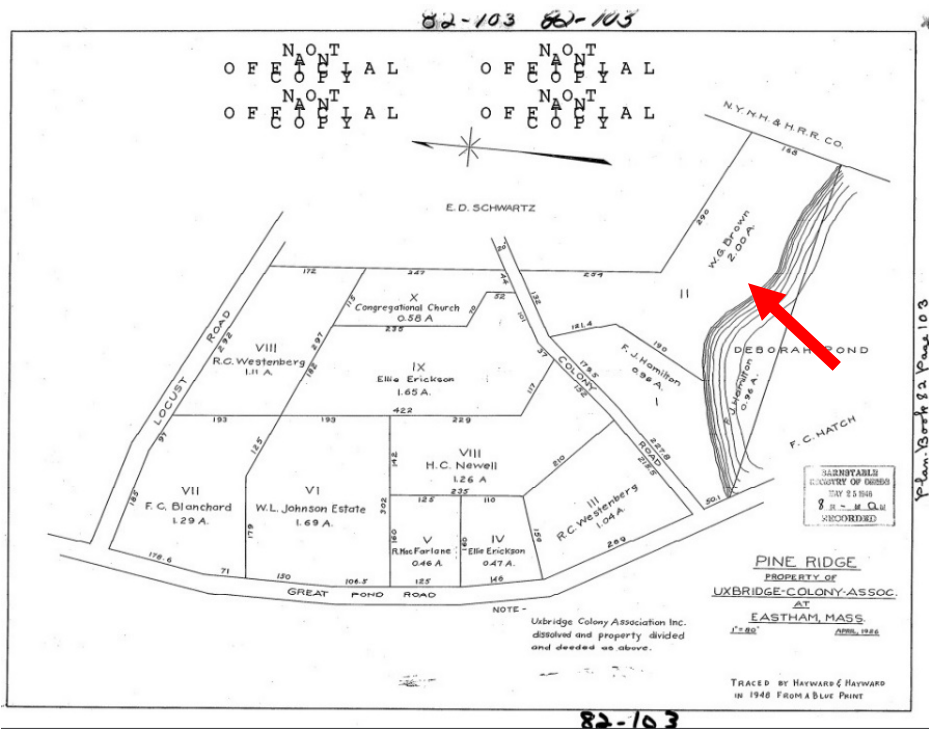


Figure 2. 1926 Pine Ridge subdivision, "traced" and recorded 1946 (arrow to Lot II added).